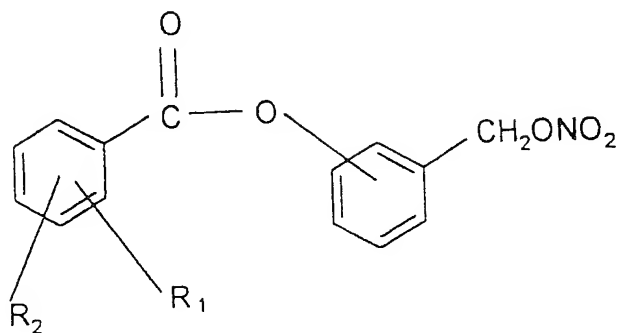


**IN THE CLAIMS:**

1. (Currently Amended) A process for obtaining compounds of formula (I):



(I)

wherein:

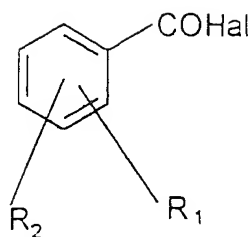
$\text{R}_1$  is the  $\text{OCOR}_3$  group; wherein  $\text{R}_3$  is methyl, ethyl or linear or branched  $\text{C}_3\text{-C}_5$  alkyl or the residue of saturated heterocyclic ring having 5 or 6 atoms, containing heteroatoms independently selected between O and N;

$\text{R}_2$  is hydrogen, halogen, linear or branched when possible  $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_4$  alkyl, linear or branched when possible  $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_4$  alkoxy; linear or branched when possible  $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_4$  perfluoroalkyl; mono- or di- ( $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_4$ ) alkylamino;

~~preferably in (I)  $\text{R}_1$  is acetoxy and it is in ortho position with respect to the carboxylic group,  $\text{R}_2$  is hydrogen; the oxygen of the ester group is bound to the aromatic ring substituted with the (nitroxy)methylene group in ortho, meta or para position with respect to the (nitroxy)methylene group; preferably the position is the meta one;~~

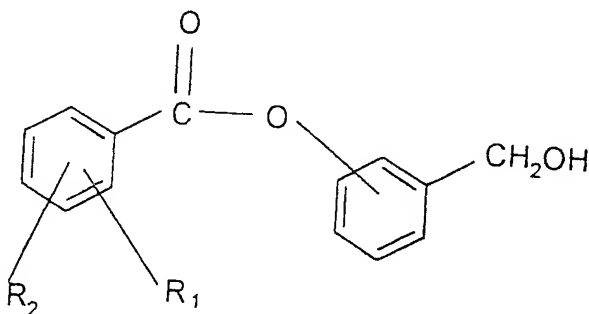
said process comprising the following steps:

a) reaction between an halide and a salicylic acid derivative formula (I-A)



(I-A)

wherein Hal = Cl, Br, and R<sub>1</sub> and R<sub>2</sub> have the above indicated meaning, with hydroxybenzylalcohol in the presence of a base in an organic solvent, or in a mixture of water with an organic solvent miscible or immiscible in water, to give the compound (I-B) having the following formula:



(I-B)

wherein R<sub>1</sub> and R<sub>2</sub> are as above defined;

b) nitration of the compound (I-B) in anhydrous conditions, in an inert organic solvent, by a mixture formed by steaming nitric acid with an inorganic acid different from nitric acid, or with an organic acid, or with an anhydride of one or two organic acids to give the nitroxy derivative formula (I).

c) recovery of the final product by adding water to the organic phase, separating the phases, drying and evaporating the organic phase.

2. (Original) A process according to claim 1, wherein in step a) the base is an inorganic or organic base.

3. (Previously Amended) A process according to claim 1, wherein in step a) the organic solvents are C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub> aliphatic alcohols; aromatic hydrocarbons, aliphatic esters, chlorinated organic solvents, aliphatic and cycloaliphatic ketones.

4. (Currently Amended) A process according to claim 1, wherein in step a) the reaction is carried out at a temperature in the range -20°C and +50°C by using, with respect to the hydroxybenzylalcohol moles under reaction, an amount by moles respectively of acid halide (I-A) in the range between 1 and 2, ~~preferably between 1.2 and 1.5~~ and an amount by moles of base in the range between 0.1 and 2, ~~preferably between 0.5 and 2~~.

5. (Currently Amended) A process according to claim 1, wherein step b) nitration is carried out at a temperature in the range -20°C and +40°C and the amount by moles of nitric acid is in a ratio between 1 and 6, ~~preferably between 1 and 3~~, with respect to the moles of the compound (I-B), the amount by moles of inorganic acid different from nitric acid, or of organic acid or of organic anhydride as above defined, is in a ratio comprised ~~beteen~~ between 0.5 and 6, preferably between 1 and 3 with respect to the moles of the compound (I-B).

6. (Original) A process according to claim 5, wherein nitration is carried out in the presence of an anhydride, which is premixed with the hydroxyester (I-B) and the resulting mixture added to the nitric acid solution in the inert organic solvent.

7. (Original) A process according to claim 6, wherein anhydride is acetic anhydride.

8. (New) A process according to claim 1, wherein in formula (I)  $R_1$  is acetoxy and it is in ortho position with respect to the carboxylic group,  $R_2$  is hydrogen; the oxygen of the ester group is bound to the aromatic ring substituted with the (nitroxy)methylene group in ortho, meta or para position with respect to the (nitroxy)methylene group.

9. (New) The process of claim 4, wherein the amount by moles of the acid halide is from 1.2 and 1.5 and the base between 0.5 and 2.